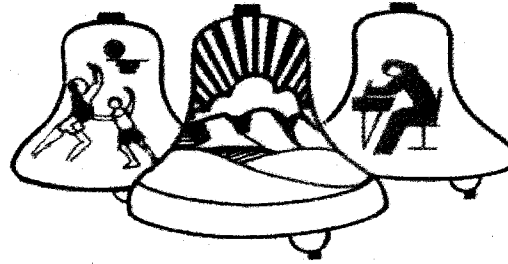


EXHIBIT 5
DATE Jan 13, 11
HB 15

FAIR-MONT-EGAN SCHOOL

Christine Schmidt-Anthony
Administrator
Susan Clanton
District Clerk



District #3
797 Fairmont Road
Kalispell, Montana 59901
(406) 755-7072
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To : Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on Long-range Planning

January 12, 2011

From: Denise VanArtsdale
Fair-Mont-Egan School Board Vice Chairwoman
Jeff Wilson
Fair-Mont-Egan School Board Chairman

Dear Members,

We are writing as Trustees of School District #3 in Kalispell. We are a rural K-8 school in the farming community between Kalispell and Bigfork. We urge to you to support the Quality Schools Facility grants.

Our staff and teachers have done a phenomenal job in making our school one of the top performers in the state. They are doing their part, and they are doing this in outdated and undersized facilities. You are well aware of the mandates placed upon schools to leave no child behind, and yet we have our highest needs students being tutored in hallways, on the stage in the gym (next to PE classes), and in the office. Clearly, our 1960's vintage building was not built for 2011 education.

As a School Board we have made sound decisions to support our staff in the mission to provide a quality education to our students. We have practiced fiscal responsibility to fund our building reserves to their maximum amount and exhausted multiple funding sources for facilities. After being awarded the opportunity to obtain the zero-interest QSCB Bonds, we ran a Bond Election which failed in the Spring of 2010--- not very well-received by the farmers who are land-rich, and cash-poor.

In 2009 we received a Quality Schools Grant for planning. We have used the funds wisely, with the anticipation that there may be consideration of additional funds to utilize the solid, well-researched plans. The process has resulted in an excellent Facilities Master Plan which addresses the specific and clearly identified needs of our district. We do not feel that any of our energy or money has been wasted throughout this process.

Many of you probably know the old coaching saying that "luck is when opportunity meets preparation." Well, it's game day, and we are prepared. It's in your hands to make sure that the fair opportunity is there for those of us who have been showing up and working hard every day. We don't need a blow out; but we do need a solid win to continue to get our Montana kids to top achievement.

Our Board of Trustees has been in the trenches alongside our teachers, staff, and neighbors practicing creativity and fiscal responsibility. We urge you to continue to give our school communities the support that we need. We ask for your support of the timely distribution of the Quality Schools Facilities Grant Money to districts like ours that have viable, well planned and highly needed facilities projects.

Sincerely,

Denise VanArtsdale, Vice Chairwoman
Fair-Mont-Egan School Board of Trustees

Jeff Wilson, Chairman
Fair-Mont-Egan School Board of Trustees